

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 28, 2011

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as the Congresswoman for 18th Congressional District of Texas, I rise with great pride to commemorate this recognition of Black History Month. African Americans from Texas like the pugilist Jack Johnson, the pioneer Bessie Coleman, Congresswoman Barbara C. Jordan, Congressman Mickey Leland, and African Americans from all across this nation have contributed greatly to the rich history of the United States; a country we love so dearly.

I am especially grateful to be among my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus as we do our best to honor those who came before us and strive to make this country a better place for all Americans through our work here in Congress, back home in our districts and all across this great nation. As we do so, we must remember that we are part of the great diversity of citizens that make up the fabric of this nation and we must, as African Americans, remember to reach out to all Americans from every race, creed, and color for the common purpose of leaving our country better than we found it for our children and their children's children.

This morning I had the privilege of speaking in Austin, Texas, before the Texas Legislative Black Caucus at its Legislative Summit. Being there in the Capitol built by slaves and speaking before that audience made me realize that we have a reason to celebrate our heritage and our contributions to this great nation. My speech was about African Americans remaining relevant in these changing times. Today as we bring Black History Month to a close, I would like to reflect on the many reasons to celebrate and I issue a call for all of my colleagues to be their best for our country as we continue our legislative work in this chamber.

We have reason to celebrate our heritage: We are relevant.

Barbara C. Jordan knew the importance of remaining relevant when she recited from the preamble to the Constitution and said: "We the people." It is a very eloquent beginning. But when the document was completed . . . I was not included in 'We the People.' I felt somehow for many years that George Washington and Alexander Hamilton just left me out by mistake. But through the process of amendment, interpretation and court decision I have finally been included in "We, the people."

As redistricting hits full stride this year and the Texas legislature conducts the redrawing of congressional districts, we the people, Black and Brown Texans alike, must stand together and be represented! Our vote must count. Our candidates must be elected. For our cause is the same. A defeat for African Americans is a defeat for Hispanics and a de-

feat for Hispanics is a defeat for African Americans. This is a unique moment in time to make sure our voices are heard, that our votes count, and that we as African Americans and Hispanics remain relevant.

As a Senior Member of the House Judiciary Committee, Immigration Policy and Enforcement Subcommittee, I see a barrage of immigration hearings that embody a shameless attempt to pit Hispanics against African Americans. This is an outrage! We must not take the bait. The vast majority of economists, and all of the most recent research in the area, confirm that immigrants actually improve the job prospects of U.S. workers. The truth is that, in general, African-Americans and other minorities actually benefit from Immigration. Comprehensive immigration reform that provides a fair path to citizenship combined with investments in our businesses, and investment in our education and job training programs are the only solution. Draconian spending cuts to these programs and dredging up racial scapegoats are not the solution.

As a member of the Congressional Black Caucus, I take pride in my work with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and serve as an enthusiastic liaison between the two caucuses. As I do so, I am reminded of how my predecessor Congressman Mickey Leland reached out to work with Cesar Chavez as he struggled for better working conditions and dignity for Hispanic workers. He saw the importance of our communities working together in his day and I see it now in mine. African Americans endured the injustice of slavery and servitude and we must remember that history repeats; sometimes it just visits another community in the process. We must cast our fate together.

To remain relevant, we must commit right here and right now to embracing and working with our Hispanic brothers and sisters. Truth be told, our plight is the same and shared progress is our common cause. As Malcolm X said "We are not fighting for integration, nor are we fighting for separation. We are fighting for recognition as human beings. We are fighting for human rights."

In closing, I invoke the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., truly spoke of remaining relevant when he said "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character." Today, we are closer to achieving that dream. We are relevant. We are "pertinent to the matter at hand." And it is by working together with our Hispanic brothers and sisters that we will remain relevant.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICHAEL G. GRIMM

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2011

Mr. GRIMM. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 92 I inadvertently voted "no." I intended to vote "yes."

ALAMOSA HIGH SCHOOL TRIBUTE

HON. SCOTT R. TIPTON

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2011

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Alamosa High School wrestling team and coach Gary Ramstetter. Alamosa's Mean Moose claimed their first Class 3A state wrestling title, with eight wrestlers placing in the top four and an individual title won by Darin Sisneros. It was Mr. Ramstetter's eighth state title with the school, and earned him Coach of the Year honors.

Alamosa finished the tournament with a commanding 178 points, the closest competitor scoring only 122½. The victory represents a true team effort with every wrestler fighting for every point. Mr. Sisneros' individual title is also the 48th won by a student during coach Ramstetter's 30 year tenure, a testament to the hard work and motivation of both men.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Alamosa's wrestling team and their legendary coach. Under his expert guidance, I have no doubt that Alamosa can win many more state titles and continue its legacy of success both in the classroom and on the mat.

TRIBUTE TO MAURA PAT KELLY

HON. TIMOTHY H. BISHOP

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2011

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the long and distinguished career of a good friend and public servant of this House, Mrs. Maura "Pat" Kelly. Pat's roots in our home state of New York run as deep as the mark she leaves on this institution after fifty-three years of service. I was honored to attend Pat's retirement ceremony last month and at which our distinguished chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, delivered the following prayer that I proudly submit on his behalf.

PRAYER FOR PAT KELLY'S RECEPTION

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2011, REV. DANIEL P. COUGHLIN

Holy Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, with all the angels and saints we praise You, with all the Irish legends and leprechauns we stand before You.

As we celebrate the life and service of Maura "Pat" Kelly this day, we do so with honor and humor, memories and best wishes. To this noble institution throughout the years she has always brought a feminine touch, a New York touch, and a touch of the Irish.

We thank You, Lord, for giving her years of health and happiness, work and colleagues, bosses and crosses, as well as love of this institution of Congress inherited from her mother, ever changing through the years and never fully understood or appreciated by the American people she served.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.